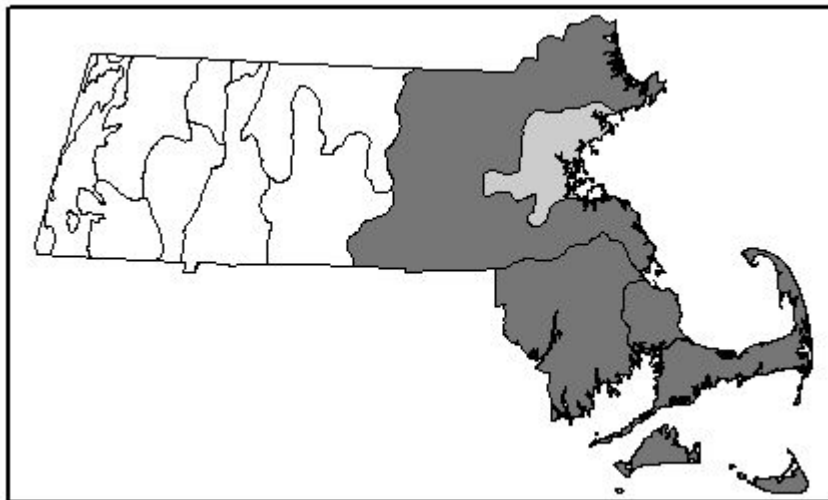


**Community Name:** MARITIME BEACH STRAND COMMUNITY  
**Community Code:** CT2B1A0000  
**SRANK:** S3



**Concept:** Sparsely vegetated, long, narrow community between wrack line of high tide and foredunes.

**Environmental Setting:** Usually part of a barrier beach system, seaward of dunes, but above the daily high tides. Beach strands are subject to overwash during storms and spring tides.

**Vegetation Description:** Sparsely vegetated community with scattered cover of sea-rocket (*Cakile edentula*) and dune grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*). Beach pea (*Lathyrus japonicus*), seabeach orache (*Atriplex pentandra*), seabeach sandwort (*Honckenya peploides*), seaside-flatsedge (*Cyperus filicinus*), seabeach saltwort (*Salsola kali* ssp. *kali*) and seaside goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*) occasionally occur at the foot of the dunes or protected beaches, along with the non-native Russian thistle (*Salsola kali* spp. *tragus*).

**Associations:**

**Habitat Values for Associated Fauna:** Several species of shorebird are beach specialist, nesting and foraging on beach strands, including Least Terns (*Sterna antillarum*), Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*), and American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*). Beach strands are important shorebird staging areas: migratory shorebirds use barrier beach systems, including the beach strand community, for resting and congregating before and during migration. Merlins (*Falco columbarius*) and Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) forage on beaches during migrations. No amphibians or reptiles regularly occur on beaches. Few mammals use the beaches except for hunting by mid-sized predators such as red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*) and resting by seals (mostly *Phoca vitulina*). Invertebrate specialists include several species of tiger beetles, beach flies, and, on the south side of the Cape, ghost crabs at their northern limit of distribution.

**Associated Rare Plants:**

LEYMUS MOLLIS SSP MOLLIS	SEA LYME-GRASS	E
MERTENSIA MARITIMA	OYSTERLEAF	E
POLYGONUM GLAUCUM	SEA-BEACH KNOTWEED	- WL

**Associated Rare Animals:**

CHARADRIUS MELODUS	PIPING PLOVER	T
CICINDELA DORSALIS DORSALIS	NORTHEASTERN BEACH TIGER BEETLE	E
STERNA ANTILLARUM	LEAST TERN	SC

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

<b>Examples with Public Access:</b>	Race Point, Provincetown; Monomoy NWR, Chatham; Coast Guard Beach, CCNS, Eastham; Nauset Beach, Chatham and Orleans; Sandy Neck, Barnstable; Plymouth Beach, Plymouth; Horseneck Beach State Reservation, Westport; Plum Island, Parker River NWR, Newbury.		
<b>Threats:</b>	Invasive species: seabeach poppy ( <i>Glaucium flavum</i> = <i>Argemone glossum</i> ); Recreational use, foot and vehicular traffic.		
<b>Management Needs:</b>	Allow natural disturbances, deposition and erosion, and exposure to overwash and salt spray. Restrict vehicle traffic.		
<b>Synonyms</b>			
<b>USNVC/TNC:</b>	Includes: Sand flats- <i>Cakile eduntula</i> sparsely vegetated Alliance -- <i>Cakile edentula</i> ssp. <i>edentula</i> - <i>Salsola caroliniana</i> sparse Vegetation [CEGL004400].		
<b>MA (old name):</b>	COASTAL BEACH STRAND COMMUNITY.		
<b>ME:</b>	Beach strand community.		
<b>NH:</b>	Coastal beach strand community.		
<b>VT:</b>	Not applicable.		
<b>NY:</b>	Maritime beach.		
<b>CT:</b>	Includes: <i>Cakile edentula</i> - <i>Chenopodium album</i> Perennial Forb Vegetation.		
<b>RI:</b>	Maritime beach.		
<b>Weatherbee:</b>	Not applicable.		
<b>Author:</b>	P. Swain	<b>Date:</b>	7/1/99